

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14-21 are pending and under consideration.

Independent claim 1 recites a printing apparatus, comprising: a firmware unit to store function information of a plurality of printing apparatus models the common firmware is a multi-model firmware that can be used in the plurality of printing apparatus models. Thus, the printing apparatus comprises the firmware unit.

The Examiner relies upon the driver 100 of Chapin as corresponding to the claimed firmware unit. However, the driver 100 of Chapin is not an element of the printers 130, 132, 134. Instead, the driver 100 is part of the PC 110.

Independent claim 7 recites confirming a model index designation command which designates a model index corresponding to one of the plurality of printing apparatus models, during a manufacturing operation.

In Chapin, the designation of the model index occurs after manufacture, during the operation of the network by the user. Specifically, paragraph 20 states that the multiple printer driver is installed, and the user would then select from all of those printers which are supported by the multiple printer driver.

The Examiner relies upon paragraph 19, which states that "if all the printers on a network are the same model and type, for example the Xerox Phaser 6200 printer, then installing a print driver for the Xerox Phaser 6200 printer alone is sufficient for operating all of the Phaser 6200 printers on the network." Thus, the multiple printer driver of Chapin is a program which is installed to the host PC enabling the host PC to use a plurality of printers. However, it is noted that it is the nature of the printer *at the time when the driver 100 is connected to the network* that determines the function of the driver. This is different from establishing the compatible printer model at the time of manufacture. Furthermore, the common firmware of claim 1 is a multi-model firmware that can be commonly used in the plurality of printing apparatus models and installed in each of the image forming apparatuses itself.

Paragraph 19 goes on to discuss the situation when multiple printer types are connected to the driver 100. Again, this is a condition at a time of *use*, not a time of manufacture.

Claim 7 is used as an example. Independent claims 11, 12, 18, 19, 20 and 21 are similarly patentable over Chapin.

The remaining reference does not overcome these deficiencies.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

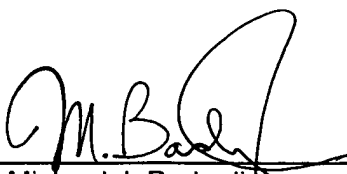
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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